

Hello Ms. Jeffrey,

January 19, 2010

I would like to congratulate you on your appointment as Minister of Natural Resources. Not very long ago that would have meant an appointment as the Minister in charge of one of the prominent and most prestigious ministries in government. Unfortunately you have inherited a Ministry gutted and underfunded by your predecessors, a shadow of its former self.

I notice in your resume that you have been a distinguished politician as Assistant to the Minister of Transportation, Assistant to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, a Member of Standing Committee on Social Policy and Chair of the Standing Committee on General Government. However, nowhere in the resume is there anything to suggest that you have any experience in or any understanding of the value and importance of Ontario's natural resources. Nor is there anything to suggest that you will do anything different than your predecessors who allowed Forestry to be removed from the MNR and have planned a new internal structure for the MNR that no longer includes a Fish and Wildlife Branch.

I would be the first to point out that the MNR of the recent past has been far from a perfect model in its management of our natural resources. However, an updated and improved MNR is a far better way to preserve, protect, restore and improve our natural resources than the hodgepodge that now exists. I would hope that you understand that our natural resources are all parts of one ecosystem and need to be managed as one for the benefit of all the citizens of Ontario.

If your goal is to do the best for the natural resources of this Province and in extension the people who use and value these resources I sincerely wish you all the best.

Gaye Smith  
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